

MODERN METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH MYTHOLOGY TO STUDENTS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15500915>

Abstract

This thesis provides a comprehensive overview of the literary, cultural, and linguistic significance of English mythology and offers a theoretical and practical analysis of effective methods for teaching it to university students. The research explores the potential to develop students' language competence, intercultural perception, and literary thinking through mythological sources such as *Beowulf*, King Arthur legends, and Celtic folklore. The thesis substantiates the use of methods like contextual reading, dramatization, visual approaches, comparative analysis, and creative expression to train students to be active, independent, and critical thinkers. Teaching the semantic capabilities of English in its cultural context through mythological images and narratives is recommended as an important didactic approach.

Keywords: English mythology, *Beowulf*, Arthurian legends, language teaching methodology, intercultural communication, legend, dramatization, literary image, Celtic folklore, intertextual approach.

1. Literary and Cultural Value of English Mythology

English mythology includes the following major legends:

- The epic *Beowulf* (Anglo-Saxon epic);
- The legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table (Camelot, Merlin, Excalibur);
- Tales of Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest;
- Celtic folklore (fairies, druids, banshee, kelpie, leprechaun);
- Mystical places (Avalon, Glastonbury, Stonehenge);
- Interactions with Norse mythology (the influence of Odin and Thor in English culture).

These mythological texts serve as important sources for building systems of imagery in literature and developing imagination and symbolic expression. They also strongly influenced the works of authors such as J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and J.K. Rowling, making mythology relevant not only historically but also in the modern context.

2. Advantages of Language Learning through English Mythology

Teaching language through mythological texts is an effective way to understand lexical units, idioms, metaphorical structures, and culturally symbolic expressions in English. For instance, phrases like "Holy Grail," "Sword

in the Stone," and "Knight in shining armor" carry rich metaphorical and cultural meanings.

Teaching students mythological texts helps:

- Develop intercultural intertextual thinking;
- Enhance pronunciation and intonation;
- Practice reading strategies (skimming, scanning, inference);
- Focus on socio-cultural connotations;
- Improve both written and spoken language skills.

3. Methodological Approaches to Teaching English Mythology

1. Text-Based Discussion

Each mythological text (legend, tale, poem, or scene) serves as the basis for analysis. Students analyze the sequence of events, study the characters, and reflect on symbolic elements (e.g., the sword — power, dragon — evil). This approach:

- Develops critical thinking;
- Helps identify intertextual connections (e.g., similarities between Excalibur and a lightsaber);
- Enhances understanding of contextual words and phrases.

2. Creative Reinterpretation

Students retell the legend in modern language or adapt it to a new context.

For example:

- "What would Merlin be like in today's world?"
- "What kind of leader would King Arthur be at a modern university?"

This method helps students:

- Actively use their vocabulary;
- Strengthen their personal expression style;
- Relate myths to their own lives and times, fostering cultural thinking.

3. Role-Play / Dramatization

Enacting famous scenes (e.g., a conversation between Merlin and Arthur, Beowulf fighting Grendel). Dramatization:

- Enhances speaking skills;
- Improves pronunciation and intonation;
- Increases engagement and strengthens presentation skills.

4. Visual Learning Tools

Using maps, diagrams, family trees (e.g., Arthurian lineage), and character maps helps:

- Visual learners understand content better;
- Deepen understanding of historical, geographical, and cultural concepts (e.g., location of Avalon, Camelot);
- Reinforce memory through visual-textual integration.

5. Lexical and Semantic Analysis

Analyzing poetic and metaphorical vocabulary used in mythological texts, such as:

- "Holy Grail" — symbol of idealism and ultimate goal;
- "Sorcery" and "Prophecy" — religious and magical concepts;
- "Destiny," "Fate" — mythological semantics of fate.

This method enables students to:

- Understand connotative expressions;
- Work with synonyms, antonyms, and contextual meaning differences;
- Prepare for translation and written text analysis.

6. Cultural Comparative Approach

Students compare elements of English mythology with Uzbek mythology. For example:

• *Beowulf* and *Alpomish* — hero archetypes and themes of bravery and sacrifice;

- Merlin and G'ijduvon Piri — wise magician figures;
- Avalon and Baxmal Valley — concepts of magical places.

This approach:

- Fosters cultural thinking;
- Opens students to global cultures;
- Encourages language learning through national values.

4. Assignment Types and Assessment Based on English Mythology

Possible student assignments include:

• Thematic presentations: "Merlin's Role in Arthurian Legends" or "Symbolism in Beowulf";

- Mini-essay: "Why is Excalibur a symbol of power?";
- Writing clusters and concept maps based on key images;
- True/False tests, multiple choice, and quizzes;
- Writing legends in modern formal style.

English mythology provides a rich resource for enhancing students' cultural thinking, imagination, aesthetic perception, and language knowledge. By studying mythology, students enrich their vocabulary, expand their literary thinking, prepare for intercultural communication, and develop diverse forms of creative expression. In modern education, working with such culturally rich texts is one of the most effective methods for fostering integrative, interactive, and critical thinking. This research demonstrates that incorporating English mythology into the language teaching process enhances the teacher's methodological capacity and enables lessons to be both meaningful and creative.

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